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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPARTMENT FOR D, P, AF; LONDON AND PARIS FOR AFRICAWATCHERS

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SUBJECT: DARFUR PEACE TALKS: CONSIDERING SECURITY ISSUES

¶11. (SBU) Summary: After reaching agreement on a humanitarian protocol on September 1, the African Union-led negotiations on Darfur are addressing security issues, with the primary goal of strengthening the mechanisms for the implementation of the N'Djamena Humanitarian Cease-fire Agreement. A draft proposal on security issues is being compiled and will be considered on September 4. It is clear that the Government of Sudan wants a deal, from its delegation making concessions on key issues, such as the size and mandate of the AU-monitoring force. The rebel movements' negotiating tactic is to continue to frontload extreme demands, a sign of inexperience. The AU hopes to have agreement on a security protocol by early next week. End Summary.

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HUMANITARIAN PROTOCOL ACHIEVED
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¶12. (U) On September 1, the African-Union (AU) mediation team, the Government of Sudan, and the Sudanese Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) agreed to a humanitarian protocol that includes uninhibited access for humanitarian organizations and protection measures for civilians. (Note: The humanitarian protocol was scanned to AF/SPG on September 2. End Note.) The rebel movements were able to get dropped references to agreements to which they are not a party. They then agreed to compromise language proposed by Nigerian Foreign Minister Adeniji to remove the final obstacle to the agreement which was the rebel's concern about the mention of cantonment in previous AU decisions. The agreement boosted the confidence of the rebel movements in the AU mediation team and in their own ability to achieve their demands. The GOS was anxious to get results and compromised on most points. Still wary, the rebel movements refused to initial the humanitarian protocol. They argue that humanitarian issues are interlinked with security. They have assured the AU that they will sign both protocols after agreement is reached on security issues. Nonetheless, the AU and international observers, including the U.S. delegation, continue to press rebel leaders to initial the humanitarian protocol.

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SECURITY ISSUES
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¶13. (U) Capitalizing on the momentum gained with achievement of a humanitarian protocol the previous evening, the AU mediation team and parties began discussing security issues on September 2. The AU allowed both sides to present their positions, which at times was a session to vent anger and trade accusations. The agenda items included: the report of the Joint-Cease Fire Commission, disarmament of the jandjaweed, cantonment of the rebel forces, and prisoner exchanges. The GOS, while denying any ties to the jandjaweed, did give ground in its opening remarks on the expansion of the AU monitoring mission in Sudan and agreed to the suggestion of the Chairman Hamid Al-Ghabid that the ICRC become involved in prisoner exchanges.

¶14. (U) The rebel movements complained about the "different" versions of the N'Djamena accord and then refused to discuss the cantonment of their troops. They asked the GOS to explain what measures it had taken to disarm the jandjaweed, and pressed for the GOS to live up to its commitments at N'Djamena. They demanded captured SLM/A and JEM members be released. JEM's spokesman Ahmed Lissan called for a no-fly zone in Darfur for military aircraft or civilian aircraft being used for intimidation, a weeding out of jandjaweed and other militia members from the security forces, and an investigative mechanism for crimes against humanity. SLM/A and JEM want more AU monitors and an expanded protection force with a mandate to protect civilians.

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POTENTIAL PITFALLS
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¶15. (U) Two issues may complicate reaching accord on security issues. First, the rebels' insistence on the

removal of GOS security forces from the IDP camps and other areas. The AU, however, believes this can be overcome with an acceptable security mechanism that includes the deployment of AU monitors alongside security forces. Second, the rebel movements refuse to discuss cantonment, an issue pushed by the GOS delegation throughout the discussion. However, it is likely that the AU will be able to get this issue moved to the political discussion.

¶16. (SBU) The AU hopes to obtain a security agreement early next week. They are planning a break of about three weeks before reconvening in Abuja. The Libyan delegation has not given up its efforts to move the venue to Libya. However, the Nigerian Government is against this idea and the rebel movements are cool to it. SLM/A and JEM leaders have told us that they are comfortable with the Nigerian venue, particularly the efforts of President Obasanjo and Foreign Minister Adeniji.

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COMMENT
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¶17. (SBU) The AU's stated goal on security issues is to put "flesh and bones" on the N'Djamena Humanitarian Cease-Fire and to create specific mechanisms to ensure compliance. We do not yet have a complete picture of what these mechanisms will look like, but expect the finalized draft by the end of September 3. The GOS wants to get a deal and we believe there is considerable maneuvering room if the rebel movements concede on moving the difficult issues of cantonment and investigation of human rights abuses to the political discussions.

¶18. (U) Minimize considered.
CAMPBELL